(d) Only the poor rural artisans are provided support.

Acute shortage of drinking water in Himachal Pradesh

3298. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether acute shortage of safe drinking water in Himachal Pradesh has been reported to Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the situation has become worse in Himachal Pradesh after sever drought like situation developed in the absence of sufficient rain-falls and snow-fall during last winter season;

(d) whether Government were requested to provide special Central assistance to Himachal Pradesh to enable the State Government to undertake various projects to augment drinking water supply in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) As reported by the Government of Himachal Pradesh, due to insufficient snowfall during the last two winters and scanty winter rains, there has been considerable reduction in the discharge of various water sources which are otherwise perennial in nature. The State experienced less than normal rainfall during the period between 1-1-2001 to 28-2-2001 and this situation has led to drought like condition in the State.

(d) The State Government has submitted a Memorandum to the Government of India requesting for an emergent relief of Rs. 90.25 crore including Rs. 32.40 crore for drinking water supply relief measures.

(e) The primary responsibility for dealing with natural calamity including drought rests with the State Government. The main source of financing relief expenditure is the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for which 75% share is contributed by the Central Government. For major calamities, where funds in the CRF do not suffice, assistance is admissible from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). These arrangements are in accordance with the award of the Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC). Apart from releasing the entire Central share of CRF

for 2001 -2002 amounting to Rs. 34.24 crore, a special assistance of Rs. 18.98 crore has also been released from the NCCF for drought to Government of Himachal Pradesh.

So far as rural drinking water supply is concerned, it is also a State subject. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State by providing financial assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Rural Drinking Water component of Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY). During 2000-2001, Rs. 53.85 crores under ARWSP and Rs. 30.77 crores under Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY have been released to State Government. During the current financial year i.e. 2001-2002, an allocation of Rs. 55.59 crore has been made under ARWSP including DDP areas out of which Rs. 27.76 crore have been released and under Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY, Rs. 7.91 crore have been allocated out of which Rs. 3.95 crore have been releasd to the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Further to facilitate the mitigation efforts, in view of the prevailing scarcity of drinking water in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh on account of drought, the priorities fixed in the ARWSP guidelines have ben relaxed by the Government of India to the extent that the funds under ARWSP and Rural Drinking Water component of PMGY could also be utilised for activities relating to repair, rejuvenation, renovation, restoration and replacement of existing rural drinking water schemes in areas affected by scarcity of drinking water in the State.

Amount released under PMGSY to Assam

3299. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what amount has been released under PMGSY to the State of Assam last year;

(b) what is its utilisation;

(c) what amount will be released in the current budgetary year of 2001-2002; and

(d) what is the percentage of utilisation in all the rural development schemes of Assam sent by Union Government?